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# Newsletter

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## GRADUATE SCHOOL ★ USDA

February 6, 1959

To the Faculty, Committee Members and  
others associated with the Graduate School:

### CALENDAR

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#### February

4 Science Lecture Jefferson auditorium 3 p.m.  
"Jet Propulsion" by R. E. Gibson, Johns Hopkins University

9 Spring semester classes begin

18 Science Lecture auditorium at the Plant Industry Station 3 p.m.  
"Intricacies of the Mitochondrial Cytochromes" by W.W. Mainio,  
March Rutgers University

3 Faculty luncheon  
"Highlights and Lessons of our Foreign Efforts"  
E. N. Holmgreen, International Cooperation Administration

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Seventy hard-working Graduate School teachers and committee members were at Saturday's workshop on "How We Teach." Interest ran high. The golf course outside and the beautifully appointed Kenwood Country Club House made a comfortable background for our activities.

Government-wide representation, a rich depth of competency, a wealth of intellectual resources, years of experience in the Graduate School and elsewhere--all contributed toward an exhilarating exchange of ideas. Participants pooled their "know-how" toward the solution of the persistent problems and to enrich learning experience for Graduate School students.

Some impressions of the workshop follow:

Our promptness was a measure of how conscientious our faculty members are, even on Saturday. The pick of the parking spaces was filled by 9 a.m. and the name tags at the registration desk had dwindled to less than 10 when the meeting was called to order at 9:25. No one appeared to feel hurried. We took time for a coffee break and a leisurely luncheon. People felt free to take part in discussions. We finished shortly after 3 p.m., a few minutes ahead of schedule.

The Kenwood Country Club was an ideal place for a workshop - quiet, spacious, and excellently staffed. The room on the second floor where we held our general meetings looked out on the golf course - where only an occasional golfer reminded us that we were not entirely isolated. We are indebted to James G. Osborne of the Forest Service and one of our instructors, for arranging for us to use the Club.

The workshop attracted both old hands and newcomers. Among the participants were many who have been teaching here for years and a few who joined the faculty only last fall.

Glenn Wagner told a story from "Peanuts" that helped turn the discussion of his work group from "this is the way it is" to "this is what we can do about it." The incident is the one in which Lucy says, "I know what's the matter with you, Charlie Brown, you're just Charlie Brown."

And he asks, "What can I do about it?"

Lucy replies, "Oh, I don't prescribe, I just diagnose."

The diagnosis for releasing the creative talents of our students touched on every point at issue in our teaching. In brief, the work group agreed that:

To stimulate the desire for creativeness, the teacher must raise the level of the student's discontent so that he becomes dissatisfied with what once satisfied him.

The teacher's own enthusiasm is the key. The students feel it, pick it up, and reflect it back - but the instructor must bring the kindling to the fire. Along with this, he must know the students as individuals. He must establish a friendly, informal atmosphere in the classroom and build a sense of unity in the class.

In the administration, we can help by keeping classes to a size that is conducive to these goals. The ideal size varies with the subject matter taught.

The work group agreed further that we can give the student insights into opportunities to be creative in his own environment through assignments that encourage the use of resources at hand.

One of our goals is to create for students an image of the Graduate School as a place for self-improvement and self expression. Students come for special purposes. They don't get an overall view.

In his presentation to this work group, Martin Miller used a photograph to illustrate how to help students see that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. It evoked a lively discussion. We expect to hear that this presentation is used in other workshops, and to use it again - for we will be holding others.

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In contrast with tranquilizers, psychic energizers such as LSD, Marsilid, and similar compounds are "I do give a damn" type of drug. They produce excitement, increase awareness of surroundings, and enhance sensitivity and muscle tone.

They are being used - in some cases with dramatic results - to treat patients suffering from depression, alcoholism, and similar ills.

In our SCIENCE lecture, January 18, we had a look at psychic energizers from the view of scientists who are trying to find what happens chemically in the neural system when these agents are taken into it. Our speaker was Sydney Spector, of the Laboratory of Chemical Pharmacology at the National Heart Institute.

Dr. Spector pointed out that the use of agents to energize the nervous system goes back to prehistoric times, and primitive tribes in some parts of the world still follow the practice. Since 1955, biochemists, neuropsychologists, and scientists in related specialties have been trying to get a clearer picture of the chemical mechanism.

Dr. Spector and his co-workers are studying the effects of these drugs in inhibiting the enzyme - monoamine oxidase, which is localized chiefly in the brainstem.

For those of you interested in reading further on the subject, we recommend a special article prepared for Modern Medicine, August 1, 1958. The title is "Interaction of Psychotropic Drugs with Physiologic and Biochemical Mechanisms in Brain." The author, Bernard B. Brodie is chief of the Laboratory of Chemical Pharmacology at the National Heart Institute.

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"We need to know what is going on...to have some eyes and ears in the Soviet Union to follow changes in the Russian economy. We had no access to American newspapers during our tour and felt completely isolated. We got the impression that was like the Russian people are...they do not know what is going on in the world.

"I believe that the rank and file of the Russian people do not want war. As evidence, one experience stands out in my mind. After visiting the experiment station where luncheon was served, I thanked the lady in charge. She held my hand and would not let it go until I had assured her that American people want peace. She felt it very keenly. It was not propaganda. I think that the best thing we can do in the interest of peace is to have as free exchange as possible of people. The Russian people need to know what is going on in the rest of the world."

The quotations are from the talk by Sherman Johnson at our first faculty luncheon for 1959. For a detailed account of Dr. Johnson's observations as a leader of a team to Russia last summer, we refer you to his article in the October 1958 issue of Foreign Agriculture.

Dr. Johnson was elected president of the International Conference of Economists at a meeting in New Delhi last fall. He has returned to India for a three-months assignment with the Ford Foundation.

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## AMONG OURSELVES

Good news as we begin the year is that the Graduate School has more office space. We have been given two bays in the fourth wing of the basement of the South Building. This gives us space for one desk and the files and other equipment used for correspondence courses. Norma Hughes has moved to the new quarters. Her room number is 0422.

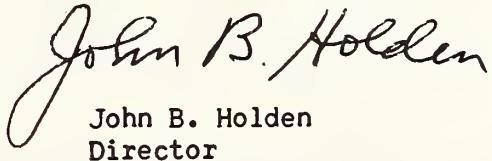
The additional space has made it possible for us to fill another post on our staff. Jean Acuff, who came to work when she finished her final exams at George Washington, will serve as secretary for the Registrar and for the Assistant Director. Miss Acuff is from Springfield, Mo. She has worked at Southeastern University and for Manpower, Inc. during her college years. She completed requirements for a B.A. at the end of the fall semester.

We were delighted to see a member of our faculty occupying a prominent position in the picture story, "They Help Keep Washington on the Literary Map," in the Washington Post, January 6. "Pat McGerr," the caption said, "has written seven novels. A graduate of the Columbia School of Journalism, she did publicity work before her first book was published in 1946. For two years she has been working on a novel about the Biblical figure, Martha, sister of Mary and Lazarus."

We were also pleased to see the picture of another faculty member, Giorgio Tagliacozzo, in Verbal Level, publication of the N. Y. Society for General Semantics. Dr. Tagliacozzo was the Society's January speaker. His subject, "The Tree of knowledge" permitted him to summarize material that he has assembled on the contemporary movement for the unity of knowledge in his work as editor of a foreign cultural radio program.

A Christmas note from Maude K. Swingle tells us she is working full-time for the California Historical Society in San Francisco. Mrs. Swingle formerly taught indexing at the Graduate School.

Sincerely,



John B. Holden  
Director